

WALL STREET JOURNAL

5 June 1986

ARTICLE APPEARED  
ON PAGE 31

# U.S. Widening Probe of Alleged Spying by Israel

## Ex-Navy Aide Pleads Guilty Of Plotting to Commit Espionage for the Israelis

By JOHN J. FIALKA

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WASHINGTON — Federal prosecutors said they are engaged in a broadening investigation of alleged Israeli espionage aimed at the U.S. following disclosures by Jonathan Jay Pollard, a former U.S. Navy intelligence analyst who pleaded guilty yesterday to conspiring to commit espionage on Israel's behalf.

The investigation, which could damage relations between the U.S. and Israel, involves several current or former Israeli officials and an unidentified U.S. "associate" of Mr. Pollard's whose name has been disclosed to a grand jury here.

The guilty plea by Mr. Pollard is believed to be the first time the U.S. has pressed an Israeli espionage case to a successful prosecution. The FBI has a long history of investigating Israeli intelligence activities; however, most investigations have ended privately and inconclusively amid rumors that the Israelis involved were quietly sent back to Israel.

Joseph E. diGenova, U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia, said Attorney General Edwin Meese "has asked us to pursue this case wherever it leads."

### Israelis Named

Court papers released by Mr. diGenova yesterday named several Israelis as undicted co-conspirators with Mr. Pollard. They include Rafi Eitan, a former Israeli intelligence official; Aviem Sella, a colonel in the Israeli Air Force; Joseph Yagur, a former scientific counsel attached to Israel's consulate in New York, and Irit Erb, a secretary at Israel's embassy in Washington. The papers said an unidentified U.S. "associate" introduced Mr. Pollard to his Israeli "handlers."

The papers indicated that Mr. Pollard gave the Israelis satellite photos and a "voluminous" number of documents that could damage the U.S. if released. Some of the documents reportedly were classified "Special Compartmentalized Informa-

tion," a higher secrecy level than "Top Secret."

Mr. Pollard could face life imprisonment and a fine of as much as \$250,000. His wife, Anne Henderson Pollard, pleaded guilty yesterday to two lesser charges connected with the theft by her husband. She faces as many as 10 years in prison and a potential fine of as much as \$500,000. Both Pollards signed papers agreeing to cooperate with federal prosecutors.

The court documents said Mr. Pollard was promised more than \$300,000 for selling secrets to Israel and was offered an Israeli passport bearing his picture and identifying him as an Israeli citizen named "Danny Cohen." Prosecutors said the passport, to be used when Mr. Pollard moved to Israel, was "a demonstration of gratitude for services rendered."

### 'Renegade' Operation

Israeli officials, asserting that the episode was a "renegade" intelligence operation, have denied any government involvement with the Pollards. A spokesman for Israel's embassy in Washington said Israel would have no comment on the new disclosures.

Mr. diGenova said his investigators haven't reached a final conclusion on whether the Israeli government was officially involved, noting that the investigation on this point "is continuing." He said Israeli officials have cooperated with the probe, even allowing Mr. diGenova and other investigators to interview people in Israel.

The papers submitted to the court by federal prosecutors said Mr. Pollard initially met with Col. Sella at the home of an unidentified "Israeli diplomat" in Pottomac, Md., a suburb of Washington.

### Pollard's Instructions

Prosecutors asserted Col. Sella allegedly instructed Mr. Pollard on what documents to steal from the Naval Investigative Service in Suitland, Md., where Mr. Pollard worked as a "watch officer" in a new "antiterrorist alert center."

The court papers said Mr. Pollard made "biweekly" deliveries of the documents to a Washington apartment building where Ms. Erb, a woman identified as a "secretary" at the Israeli embassy, maintained two apartments.

Prosecutors said the second apartment held "sophisticated copying and photographic equipment" used to duplicate the U.S. documents, which Mr. Pollard later returned to the government offices.

Mr. Pollard, who is 31 years old and has a history of emotional problems, used a "courier card" that allowed him to leave his office without being searched. The documents said he took considerable pains to

avoid detection during his deliveries—including visiting a car wash, where he transferred stolen documents from one briefcase to another while parked inside the wash.

After Col. Sella returned to Israel in Sept. 1984, Mr. Pollard used Ms. Erb's second apartment for monthly meetings with Mr. Yagur, who was introduced to him as his new "handler," according to the documents. In spy parlance, a "handler" is a government operative who directs the activities of one or more spies.

The documents suggest the Israelis were tipped off that the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Navy investigators were closing in on Mr. Pollard. On Nov. 17th, when Mr. Pollard appeared at Ms. Erb's apartment to retrieve some documents being photographed, she didn't come to the door—"an unusual occurrence" that made Mr. Pollard "nervous." Ms. Erb, according to the papers, left the U.S. on Nov. 20, one day before Mr. Pollard was arrested.

After arresting Mr. Pollard, investigators said they found his suitcase, which held documents on naval forces, mines, port facilities, communications and intelligence activities of an unidentified foreign country.

The suitcase also held a letter from Mr. Pollard to Mr. Yagur discussing various countries' missile systems that might be available for sale to Iran.

The Pollards received money from their Israeli contacts for two trips to Paris, where Mr. Pollard received an "expensive diamond and sapphire ring" from Col. Sella to give to Mrs. Pollard, and where they stayed in "first class hotels," according to the court documents.

Last July, the Pollards visited Mr. Eitan in Israel, where they discussed a number of things, including "the government of Israel's need for greater quantities of classified documents," according to the court papers.

Some sources have described Mr. Eitan as the chief of a small, antiterrorist unit that operated out of an office in Israel's Ministry of Defense. Others describe him as the former head of "Lekem," an Israeli government unit that gathered scientific and technical information from around the world. Lekem has since been disbanded, according to Israeli officials.